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ABSTRACT

During the past decade states in the southern United States have produced an increasing percentage of the nation's "city" magazines. Three magazines illustrate what the southern metropolitan magazines are doing to serve their readers and their communities. "Southern Living" provides information about its readers' interests as urban and suburban residents in the South. Its four main areas of concern are travel and recreation, food and entertaining, homes and decorating, and landscaping and gardening. It provides a blend of the new and old South, capturing the spirit of the region. "Texas Monthly" has adapted the formulas of successful city magazines and provides information and listings about restaurants and entertainment, "best and worst" assessments of Texas, and profiles of well-known personalities, and has run solid investigative stories on many things "sacred" to Texans. It has successfully encouraged its readers to see themselves as Texans first, and as residents of their respective cities second. "Atlanta" magazine was a Chamber of Commerce publication for its first few years, and tended to stress the city's good points and ignore its problems. After a rocky departure from the "Chamber" orientation, becoming a private concern in 1977, and undergoing a rapid succession of editors, "Atlanta" has developed a mixture of solid articles and service features, and will concentrate on in-depth reporting of science and technology, social issues, history, and economics in Atlanta and the South. (HTH)

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# The Recent Rise of Southern Magazines

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# The Recent Rise of Southern Magazines

The rapid growth in the South, and especially in its cities and developing metropolitan areas, during the past few decades has encouraged significant growth in magazines in the area. In turn, some of these magazines not only have reflected, but also encouraged growth and development of cities, business, and industry, especially the tourism industry.

None of the Southern states[1] pose an immediate threat to the magazine industry dominance of New York, California and Illinois. Those three states and the District of Columbia together accounted for approximately 62 percent of the magazine industry's employment, as reported in the 1977 Census of Manufactures[2]. Few of the nation's leading magazines in terms of revenues and circulation are located in the South. But there has been impressive growth in Florida and several other states, and the area has accounted for an increasing percentage of the nation's magazines since World War II. During the past decade the Southern states have produced an increasing percentage of the nation's metropolitan magazines, as defined by Standard Rate & Data.

This paper will discuss the overall growth and diversity of magazines in the South and explore the rapid development of metropolitan magazines. It will provide profiles of Southern Living, Texas Monthly and Atlanta magazine to illustrate the development of metropolitan magazines in the area.

The total number of magazines in the fourteen states under discussion has more than doubled since World War II, from 895 in 1946 to 2,025 in 1981 (See Table 1). The total increased by 68 percent between 1946 and 1961, and by 34.6 percent between 1961 and 1981. The 1,130 magazines added to the South's total between 1946 and 1981 represent 22.6 percent of the total increase in United States magazines during the period. The nation's total rose from 5,880 to 10,873.

Significantly, the South's percentage of the national total has risen from 15.22 percent in 1946 to 18.62 percent in 1981 (See Table 2). The growth rate of magazines in the South has fluctuated since World War II: up 23.5 percent between 1946 and 1951; 36.1 percent between 1951 and 1961; 11.1 percent between 1961 and 1971, and 21.1 percent between 1971 and 1981. By contrast, the growth rate for all United States magazines rose 18.7 percent between 1946 and 1951; 20.6 percent between 1951 and 1961; 14.8 percent between 1961 and 1971 and 12.6 percent between 1971 and 1981.[3]

Texas had by far the largest number of magazines, 667, in the South as the 1980s began. Others with more than one hundred, included Florida and Virginia, each 202; Maryland, 177; Tennessee, 171; Georgia, 129, and North Carolina, 108. Those below one hundred included Kentucky, 82, South Carolina, 72; Alabama, 60; Louisiana, 58; West Virginia, 39; Mississippi, 30, and Arkansas, 28.

The greatest growth since 1946 has been in Florida, 446 percent; Texas, 205 percent; Virginia, 173 percent; South Carolina, 157 percent; Maryland 99 percent and Alabama, 88 percent. The greatest growth since 1961 has been in South Carolina, 118 percent; Virginia, 98 percent; Florida, 80 percent; Maryland, 58 percent, and Texas, 49 percent. All the states have increased at least fractionally since 1946. Arkansas, 24 percent; Mississippi,

21 percent, and Tennessee, 17 percent, have declined in growth since 1961 (See Table 1).

Numbers, of course, tell only part of the story. Most of the magazines are small. Fewer than 20 have circulations as large as 100,000 and only a few, such as Southern Living in Birmingham and The Upper Room in Nashville, have circulations of more than a million. Some of the largest, such as Southern Living and Progressive Farmer in Birmingham, Southern Outdoors in Montgomery, and Antiques Monthly in Tuscaloosa are located in states with smaller numbers of magazines.

The South has all kinds of magazines, including a variety of consumer, trade and professional, and house or company publications. It has magazines for persons interested in agriculture, antiques, the outdoors, religion, gospel music, travel, tourism, business, education, and other specialized subjects. Several of the major denominations have religion magazines in Nashville and Atlanta. The Good Publishing Company publishes Sepia and other magazines in Fort Worth for blacks. The Johns Hopkins magazine in Baltimore is noted for its coverage of medicine, and the 13-30 Corporation in Knoxville has pioneered the development of single advertiser magazines and specialized publications for college students and other groups. Southern Living, a regional magazine, is also recognized as one of the most successful home or shelter magazines in the country. Southern Accents is rapidly gaining attention for its coverage of homes and gardens, and Antiques Monthly is noted for its coverage of that field.

Perhaps the most significant development in Southern magazines in the past decade or so, however, has been in the metropolitan field, which covers the traditional city magazines, regional and state magazines, and various other magazines dealing with business, tourism, and other metropolitan

interests. Several city magazines were developed in the South in the 1960s or earlier, but only eight of 32 magazines (25 percent) in the Metropolitan Section of Standard Rate & Data in 1971 were from the South. By 1976 the number had risen to 30 percent, and by the early 1980s to 35 percent of the total.[4]

There are now approximately sixty metropolitan magazines in the South, including traditional city magazines such as Atlanta, Baltimore, Charlotte, and Jacksonville; state-oriented magazines such as Alabama Monthly, Louisiana Life, Commonwealth (Va.), Sandlapper (S.C.), or TarHeel (NC.); business-oriented magazines such as Atlanta Business Chronicle, Florida Trend, Houston Business Journal or Miami Business Journal; magazines such as Texas Monthly that cover several metropolitan areas; regional magazines such as Southern Living that serve serveral states, and various others.

In theory, the metropolitan magazines, especially the city magazines, could provide another voice in the more than 95 percent of the nation's cities that now have newspaper monopolies. They could, as Atlanta and others have done on occasion, provide investigative and interpretive reporting in their communities. But most in the South as elsewhere tend to concentrate on providing information on lifestyles and living in the city, information about food, travel and entertainment, and at times information about business and tourism.[5]

The three magazines chosen for closer study here were selected in part because of their economic success and in part because they illustrate what Southern metropolitan magazines, or similar magazines elsewhere, can do to serve their readers and their communities. Southern Living generally eschews controversy, but it provides myriad services related to travel and recreation, food and entertainment, homes, and gardening for its approximately two million readers. Texas Monthly seems to have found a workable blend of

the frivolous and the serious that others may seek to emulate. Atlanta has traveled the gamut from chamber magazine to independent, from chronicler of the trivial to investigative reporter. It makes a fascinating study of what the traditional city magazines have done and are doing in their communities. All three magazines illustrate the paper's contention that Southern magazines have encouraged their area's growth as well as reflected it.

## Southern Living

Southern Living was started in February 1966 after several years of planning, experimenting and market studies by the Progessive Farmer Company, publisher of Progressive Farmer magazine and books. The new magazine's development began as early as October 1963 when "The Progressive Home" section of Progressive Farmer was retitled "Southern Living" to acquaint readers with the name and experiment with the types of materials that might be offered under that title. After Southern Living became a separate magazine, the section title was changed to "Southern Farm Living."[6]

Progressive Farmer officials believed there was a need for a new magazine that would serve the interests of persons in the rapidly expanding cities and suburbs of the South. In a sense, they proposed to do for this growing new audience what the Progressive Farmer had been doing for the rural South since the late 1890s. Southern Living would be dedicated to improving the life of the urban and suburban Southerner as Progressive Farmer was dedicated to improving the life of the rural Southerner. They recognized, too, that existing national magazines were not meeting the needs of Southerners and had limited circulation in the South. The proposed new magazine could seek out an unreached and potentially affluent audience that could draw quality advertising

and also serve as a vehicle for promoting the company's book business. It was aimed at an audience that was affluent, reasonably well-educated (at least 12th grade), and youthful (25-40 range), usually with children.[7]

To get started, planners issued invitations to urban readers of Progressive Farmer and persons included on lists of affluent persons in the area. The response was heartening. About 160,000 readers of Progressive Farmer said they would like to try Southern Living, and letters sent to those on mailing lists brought in another 92,000 subscribers. The potential of the magazine was indicated in the fact that the solicitation attracted a 9 percent positive response instead of the normal 2 to 4 percent response for such efforts.[8]

The ultimate key to the magazine's success has been that it has provided a service not available elsewhere to an audience that is attractive to advertisers. It was able to exist long enough to find and develop this audience because of the solid backing provided by Progressive Farmer Company. The company provided financial backing; leadership; administrative, production and other facilities, and, perhaps most important, a solid reputation in the region for dependable service. It was prepared to lose money for five years, if necessary, to get Southern Living started, but was pleased that profits were realized much sooner.[9]

Southern Living's service to its readers has involved providing information about their interests as urban and surburban residents in the South. From the beginning, the four main areas of concern have been travel and recreation, foods and entertaining, homes and decoration, and landscaping and gardening. In presenting this information, the magazine has captured the spirit of the region. It has provided the right blend of the new and old south.

In planning their content, Southern Living editors drew heavily on Sunset magazine, which in the early 1960s was described as "the most successful regional magazine in the United States."[10] Southern Living adhered to the

three principles upon which the development of Sunset was based. These are that a regional magazine must serve a region with distinct characteristics, that it must capitalize on the differences that distinguish the region, and that every article must be of some concrete use to the reader. Sunset avoided controversy in emphasizing how its distinctive section west of the Continental Divide was different in terms of food, gardening, travel and homes. Southern Living took a similar approach in its area.[11]

Southern Living opted to leave many of the controversial issues of the 1960s and subsequent decades to the newspapers or other media. It chose not to have an editorial page. But it has in its own way encouraged conservation, redevelopment of downtown areas and other positive actions. O.B. Copeland, who served as editor from the founding until 1969 and in a higher executive position in the company after that, once remarked that Southern Living could "contribute more to conservation by providing positive examples than by editorializing against the destructive forces."[12] "We took a positive approach," Copeland said on another occasion. "We think it's better to have an article on family camping in the Smokies than to editorialize against the rising divorce rate. We felt it does more good to take a positive look at the enjoyable aspects of Southern life."[13] Gary McCalla, editor since 1969, expressed a similar approach in 1981. "We are not journalists," he said. "We try to show a positive side of the South. Other people can take care of the other part."[14]

Emory Cunningham, publisher of both Southern Living and Progressive Farmer since 1967 and company president since 1968, speaks in a similar vein. "We have a special interest in helping people without preaching," Cunningham said. "We feel that if we can make people more aware of their immediate surroundings, it will be those people who will insist on the need for change. We're interested in the preservation of the sea coast, for example. We encourage people to use

the beaches of the South in the belief that the people who will save the beaches are the ones who use them."[15]

Perhaps the most provocative discussion to appear in the magazine insofar as issues are concerned was in a special section during the Bicentennial year on "The Future of the South." It dealt with problems as well as the area's future potential, and touched on the environment, education, downtown redevelopment, the arts, religion and other topics. The response was so favorable, McCalla said it would be made an annual presentation.[16]

Critics may not be entirely happy with Southern Living's approach to issues, but readers and advertisers seem pleased with what the magazine has done and is doing. Circulation has increased steadily from the original 252,000 to approximately two million in early 1982. Advertising pages and revenues also have shown spectacular growth. During Southern Living's first decade, the number of ad pages rose from 268 to 1,265, and revenues increased from $555,890 to $13,845,000.[17] In 1980, the magazine ranked twenty-ninth in total revenues among the 400 magazines included in Folio magazine's Folio 400 report.[18] By the end of 1981, Southern Living was the twenty-sixth largest magazine in the nation, according to The Gallagher Report to advertising representatives, with a total paid circulation of 1.97 million. Moreover, it had the fastest growth rate among the 30 magazines with the top circulations. Its revenues by then stood at $40 million a year.[19]

Southern Living's phenomenal growth can be attributed both to its operating formula and the persons who have implemented it. Copeland suggests that Cunningham deserves much of the credit for the magazine. He was confident that the formula chosen would work and persisted in it.[20] Cunningham suggests that one reason for the success of both Progressive Farmer and Southern Living is that the persons who work on them live the same lives as those they write about.[21] They know the

people and the area. "If there is a secret to our success," he said, "it's not to be found in publishing's conventional wisdom. If anything, our strength lies in understanding and conveying a certain state of mind that is distinctly Southern. In that respect, our orientation is not so much demographic as it is, to coin a phrase, psychographic."[22]

Southern Living is now considered a front-runner in the home magazine field as well as a leader among regional magazines. It also has provided many successful spin-offs as research on flowers, vegetable gardens, recipes and other article topics has been turned into books. As for the readers, they find much useful information in the magazine, and they enjoy the chatter about the South. It's fun to read. Southern Living advertises that it is synonymous with the fast-growing South, and in many respects it is. Perhaps to be completely synonymous, it would have to deal more fully and directly with the area's problems. But like many metropolitan category magazines, it has been content to leave the more negative aspects of that assignment to others and concentrate on the positives. That approach has proved to be both a socially useful and economically beneficial endeavor.

## Texas Monthly

In sharp contrast to Southern Living, which drew heavily on the well-established Progressive Farmer Company at birth, Texas Monthly was founded by persons with very limited experience in journalism. Founder and publisher Michael (Mike) Levy is a graduate of the Wharton School of Business and the University of Texas Law School. Before starting Texas Monthly in the early 1970s, his principal journalism experience was in selling advertising for Philadelphia magazine while in school at Wharton. The man he selected as editor, William (Bill) Broyles Jr., was a graduate of Rice University, a Rhodes Scholar and a decorated Vietnam veteran, but his journalism background

included a summer internship at the Houston Post and one or two contributions to the Economist while he was at Oxford. He was working as an assistant school superintendent in Houston when Levy challenged him to help develop a new magazine in Texas. Levy, Broyles, and most of the others involved in the early days were under 30.[23]

Levy's inspiration for Texas Magazine probably came from his own background in the state and his experience at Philadelphia magazine. He wanted to create a magazine similar to the good city magazines for the state of Texas, at least for its metropolitan areas. His timing was excellent. When he started Texas Monthly in February, 1973, the state did not have a strong, established city magazine, and none of its newspapers were ranked among the nation's best. By the time strong city magazines were established in cities such as Houston and Dallas and newspapers such as the Dallas Times Herald had achieved greater quality, Texas Monthly had developed a substantial following. Since Houston and Dallas, the two big advertising centers, were highly competitive, it was decided to locate the magazine in Austin, the state capital, and seek readers throughout the metropolitan areas.

Texas Monthly staffers adapted the formulas of successful city magazines to their project. They provided information and listings about restaurants and entertainment, ran the usual "best and worst" assessments, published profiles of well-known personalities such as Barbara Jordan and Leon Jaworski, and included a variety of features on everything from wildcatters and rednecks to exclusive camps for girls. But they did not stop there, as too many city magazines have done. They also have run investigative stories "on just about every sacred steer in the Lone Star State: college football, the Miss Texas Pageant, oil barons, the Texas Rangers, Dallas banks,"[24] The magazine has criticized state and local officials, airports it considers dangerous, the

state's newspapers, and many other persons and things. "I take great pride in the fact that we've managed to make just about everybody in the state mad at one time or another," Levy said.[25]

Texas Monthly has produced a skillful blend of consumer guides, features about famous Texans and Texas landmarks, eye-catching graphics by Sybil Newman Broyles, the art director, and solid investigative reporting. Moreover, it has successfully encouraged its readers to see themselves as Texans first and residents of Houston, Dallas or some other city second. The success can be seen in circulation, which rose from 20,000 when the magazine began to 275,000 by the early 1980s, and in advertising pages, which jumped from six in that first issue to more than 180 by the end of the decade. Advertising revenues reportedly rose $2.8 million in 1980 to reach $8.8 million and make Texas Monthly one of the best performing magazines in the nation. It became profitable about the fifth year and has been doing well since. Certainly, it has produced an impressive return on an original investment by Levy, estimated at approximately $300,000.[26] One can cite only estimates because the private company does not have to provide the information for the public and has not chosen to do so.

The success story has not been achieved without criticism. Feminists have attacked what they regard as an inordinate number of covers featuring women who are suggestively posed or scantily clad. Levy said there is a difference between being "sexy and sexist." Others contend that the magazine spends too much space talking about the best, worst, biggest, smallest, most and least in Texas and not enough on the investigative reporting that helped it win four national magazine awards. Levy said there is a need for both. "The fluff stuff makes the magazine work," he said. "It gets people into the heavy stuff. Without it, we would not have a magazine."[27]

Tom Curtis, editor of Houston City magazine and a former contributor to

Texas Monthly, said it has succeeded because, at its best, it had developed writers with a real voice, communicated a genuine sense of place, and, from time to time, has dealt with central values and crucial issues. "It combined flash and substance, celebration and inside poop," to convince readers around the state that Texas was worth caring about and thinking about and taking seriously. And there was no doubt that its editors loved the place, warts and all."[28]

In 1980, Texas Monthly editors decided to try their success formulas in a new venture on the west coast. Mediatex Communications Corp., the magazine's holding company, purchased New West magazine from Rupert Murdoch for an estimated $3.2 million. New West had tried to serve regional audiences in Northern and Southern California, but met stiff opposition from existing magazines such as Los Angeles. Its circulation was falling from a peak of 325,000, and it was losing more than $1 million a year when Mediatex acquired it. The Texans' idea, of course, was to produce a quality magazine in California similar to the one they have in Texas and combine the lucrative Texas and California markets for national advertisers. Some say the move, if successful, could contribute to the development of a Texas-California axis.[29]

Regardless of what evolves in California, it appears that Texas Monthly has continued potential for growth and development in its home state. Some say the magazine has become a bit soft in the past year or so, let good writers get away, and become too conservative. But most should agree that if it concentrates on what brought in the circulation, revenues and awards in the 1970s, it can do well in the 1980s.

## Atlanta

During the two decades of its existence, Atlanta magazine has not approached the economic success of either Southern Living or Texas Monthly. Its circulation and advertising revenues have been small by comparison. But the Atlanta story

tells a great deal about the development of city magazines, and its brief flirtation with excellence in the late 1960s and its rapid development in the 1980s say much about what city magazines can be and do.

Atlanta magazine was founded in 1961 as part of the Forward Atlanta campaign of the city's Chamber of Commerce. Businessmen there decided to save and develop the downtown area rather than abandon it for the suburbs. The magazine was developed out of a chamber newsletter to help tell the Atlanta story around the region, nation and world. James L. Townsend, who earned a reputation for developing city magazines, was the founding editor. Between 1961 and 1966, when he moved on to help another city magazine, he developed a smart, readable magazine with excellent graphics and a strong emphasis on community pride. Atlanta was very heavy on the city's good points and very light on its problems, and it had the usual listings and features that have characterized most city magazines.

Opie Shelton, the chamber official who founded and published the magazine, suggested in the first issue in May, 1961, the course that it would follow. He started on an encouraging note: "It is only fair to warn you that not everything in Atlanta magazine will be pleasing to read. This will not be a puff sheet which glosses over the facts of life. When there are things to cheer about, we'll be the cheerleader. But when we need to slap ourselves on the wrist, we will pull no punches. That, we believe, is the way you would want us to handle the job." Unfortunately, he did not stop there. "Atlanta magazine," he said, "enters the scene ambitious in its desire to be a top salesman for the top city in the top nation in this little old world of ours."[30] Under Townsend, the magazine was a good cheerleader and consumer guide, but it ignored many of the city's real problems.

Under Townsend's successor Jack Lange, who stepped up from managing editor,

the magazine moved away from the chamber philosophy without leaving its sanctuary. It became more investigative and critical. It acknowledged the deep-rooted poverty in prosperous Atlanta, the challenges presented by the civil rights movement, and other problems. It did not ignore the good things, but it also reported the bad in hopes that by so doing it could make them and the city better. The new approach, which evolved in the late 1960s, earned national attention from Columbia Journalism Review, Time, Business Week, and others. Business Week noted in early 1967, "Atlanta, which happens to be the official monthly of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, demonstrated as clearly as any how far some of the city magazines have come from the complacent, rosy cliches of booster literature."[31]

Unfortunately, chamber officials could not reconcile the negative images they saw growing in the magazine with the positive reactions of Business Week and others or what was being accomplished by the magazine to improve the city. The differences between the staff and chamber officials grew progressively wider until December, 1969 when several key staff members either resigned or were dismissed. Lange and his managing editor resigned, most said under the strong persuasion of the chamber and Opie Shelton.[32] Time magazine in commenting on the situation said, "The wonder is that it was ever the way it was. After all, a Chamber of Commerce publication is not expected to carry stories about racial problems, the rising local suicide rate, or an attack on big-time college athletics. Yet that is the kind of provocative material that Atlanta magazine has been publishing, particularly since Jack Lange became its editor in 1966."[33] Time praised it for its contents, imaginative layouts and some fine writing.

Norman Shavin, a veteran Atlanta newspaperman, was named to succeed Lange in January, 1970, and under his direction Atlanta magazine staked out a middle ground between the cheerleader emphasis of the early years and the investigative reporter of the late 1960s. Shavin said he favored constructive criticism

and that he felt he had authority from the chamber to criticize constructively.[34] He said he would try to keep Atlanta "reflecting the Atlanta story" and striving for excellence."[35]

Under Shavin's direction until May, 1978, the magazine maintained a fairly balanced, chamber-oriented course. "The city's growing sophistication and rising economic fortunes became the most exciting on-going story of the day."[36] It included the usual city magazine features in an attractive package, and it provided readable stories about various topics and persons. But any national attention it received was for coverage of Georgian Jimmy Carter in the White House rather than for tough investigative stories about Atlanta and its problems.

Perhaps the kind of excitement created by Atlanta magazine in the late 1960s is too much to expect from a chamber-sponsored magazine. Perhaps it is impossible for persons of that mind-set to accept the idea that only a city secure in itself, and thus ideal for new business and industry, could admit that it had poverty, racial challenges, or other problems. In any case, Atlanta seemed closer to where it started than where it was in the late 1960s when it was acquired by a private company in late 1977.

Communications Channels, Inc., a major publisher of business magazines, bought Atlanta from the Chamber of Commerce in late 1977 for an estimated $350,000, and moved its own operation to Atlanta. The chamber reportedly decided to sell to Communication Channels because of the company's national reputation as a publisher of business magazines, its previously announced decision to move to Atlanta, its financial strength and "its determination to preserve the proven quality of Atlanta magazine and enlarge its scope of influence."[37] Joseph Shore, the company's chairman, promised to move immediately to raise the magazine's relatively small (about 24,000) circulation and deal with complaints about its bland, chamber-oriented content. "We need more

controversial material, more how-to articles, more articles aimed at women and even teenagers," Shore said.[38]

In the first few years after Atlanta was purchased by Communications Channels, its circulation was increased and its content enlivened, but some uncertainty about its future direction persisted. Shavin resigned in May 1978 over what was described as a difference of opinion on the ultimate objectives of the magazine. Several other persons also left, presumably because they questioned the priorities of the new management. Some staff members reportedly were unhappy about cutbacks on the editorial and artistic side of the magazine.[39]

The founding editor James Townsend was brought back as editor after Shavin resigned, and he "redefined the magazine as a publication for all Atlanta with penetrating and sensitive articles on aspects of today's lifestyle both conventional and unconventional (such as a September, 1978, article on the myriad kinds of couples that can be found in the metro area, married and otherwise) and increased coverage of entertainment and the arts."[40] Health problems caused Townsend to retire after only six months, however, and Larry Woods, a former investigative reporter for Time magazine succeeded him as editor in November, 1978.[41]

As expected, Woods increased the number of investigative stories in the magazine and strengthened its editorial image. But serious disagreements evidently developed between him and management. Atlanta newspaper columnist Joe Cumming Jr., a veteran of 22 years with Newsweek, reported in March 1980 that Woods had resigned because of pressure from advertisers that was permitted by the publisher. "There's an attitude out there of 'we've got to make it by ingratiating ourselves with advertisers,'" Cumming quoted Woods as saying. "There was pressure put on people like me to do certain things and, I'll admit, for the past two or three months I've felt like a hooker." An airline logo on the March cover was cited as one example of putting advertisers ahead of

editorial. Cumming wrote that Woods' successor was promised there would be no interference from advertisers, but he said he was not optimistic about the magazine's future.[42]

Prospects for Atlanta's future seemed better when Jack Lange, another former editor, was named to succeed Woods. Lange had brought national recognition to the magazine in the late 1960s when it still was a chamber publication, and it was assumed that he could accomplish even more with an independent operation. Lange had continued to live in the city after leaving the magazine a decade earlier, working first in the film business and later as a consultant for corporate communications. He was first employed by Communications Channels to help develop Business Atlanta, which it acquired in 1979, and was offered the Atlanta editorship after Woods left.

Under Lange's direction for the past two years, Atlanta has developed a mixture of solid articles and service features that is at times reminiscent of his first editorship there and in some ways similar to the successful mix employed by Texas Monthly. The geographical approach is broader now, as the magazine seeks to review, reflect and enhance Atlanta's role as hub of the eastern end of the Sun Belt. Lange said Atlanta, unlike some major cities, is a state of mind that includes many persons in nearby states. He said he would like to reach more persons in the Southeast and increase the magazine's circulation to 150,000. That seems an ambitious goal, but circulation has been doubled since Atlanta became independent to more than 52,000 in early 1982.[43]

The broader outlook and Lange's definition of investigative or in-depth reporting can be seen in the magazine's recent issues, which have included an on-going series on the problems and possibilities of cities. The current Georgia governor's race was discussed against a background of trends in New South politics that are shifting power from rural to urban areas. The city's

immediate concerns are not neglected, however. A June article discussed the need for special interest groups in Atlanta to get together and keep the city functioning in the 1980s. Lange said the magazine cannot, because of its sixty-day lead time, get into breaking stories, but can and will concentrate on in-depth reporting of trends and issues. He said the series on cities will be continued over the next three or four years and perhaps will lead to the development of one or more books. In addition, he plans articles on the development of science and technology, social issues, history, and economics in Atlanta and the South. This serious reporting will, of course, be accompanied by the consumer information and calendar features that have become synonymous with most city magazines and a renewed interest in fiction and poetry.[42]

Lange's authority and influence as editor were strengthened in the summer of 1981 when he was named associate publisher. A brief article in the June issue concerning the appointment provided some indication of Lange's relations with management: "Because of Jack's efforts to humanize the magazine during the past year, Atlanta more closely reflects Atlanta than most city magazines reflect their cities. While some city magazines tend to portray their communities as if they were putting out travelogues--trendy, get-with-it closets full of skis and roller skates--Jack Lange has brought Atlanta home to Atlantans. Being associate publisher in addition to editor means that Jack will be responsible for not only the words but the music. Editors ought to have that kind of business input."[45]

Communications Channels, which publishes more than twenty magazines in addition to Atlanta and Business Atlanta, was sold in April 1981 to Argus Press Holdings Ltd., a British publishing firm. Argus Press publishes trade journals, weekly newspapers and other publications. It is a subsidiary of British Electric Traction Ltd., a London-based conglomerate with annual sales of $2 billion.

Shore indicated he had not planned to sell the company, but that the offer, which he did not reveal, from Argus was too good to turn down. He said the company planned to make Atlanta its base and acquire other publications in the United States.[46]

Atlanta's new position as a part of a conglomerate may evoke concern among its knowledgeable readers. The Saturday Review story is not forgotten, and warnings about undue business influence were given earlier. Some no doubt would like to see more investigative reporting that leads to exposes about corruption in business and government rather than in-depth looks at trends in economics, politics, or even crime, as planned for Atlanta. But the editor's additional role as assistant publisher, the magazine's commitment to serious urban journalism as well as consumer information, and the vast potential of the home city and Southeastern area give promise of exciting and rewarding things in the magazine's future.

## Some Conclusions

1. Data compiled from Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals indicate an increased interest in magazines in the South since World War II. The national trend toward specialized publications is very evident. There is great variety in the magazines, most of which have circulations of less than 100,000, and at times high quality.

2. Data compiled from Standard Rate and Data for Consumer Magazines indicate an increasing development of Metropolitan magazines in the South, especially in the past decade. This trend includes traditional city magazines, state magazines, business magazines and others.

3. Magazines such as Southern Living, Texas Monthly, and Atlanta support the contention that metropolitan magazines in the South both reflect and encourage the rapid development of the area, and especially its cities.

4. While most metropolitan magazines in the South fit the general pattern of city magazines, which emphasize listings and features, Texas Monthly, Atlanta and other magazines have provided some hard-nosed reporting of their communities.

## Notes

1. This paper includes as Southern states those which are part of the Southern Regional Education Board. They are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

2. "Periodicals," in 1977 Census of Manufactures, preliminary report issued in June 1979 by the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C.

3. Percentages were determined from data included in Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals for the years indicated.

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(Table 1)

Number of Magazines in the South by State and by Year

| | 1946 | 1951 | 1956 | 1961 | 1966 | 1971 | 1976 | 1981 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alabama | 32 | 40 | 45 | 49 | 67 | 72 | 68 | 60 |
| Arkansas | 27 | 31 | 32 | 37 | 36 | 40 | 38 | 28 |
| Florida | 37 | 47 | 74 | 112 | 111 | 127 | 173 | 202 |
| Georgia | 78 | 97 | 109 | 116 | 116 | 123 | 124 | 129 |
| Kentucky | 52 | 53 | 60 | 65 | 64 | 66 | 67 | 82 |
| Louisiana | 41 | 46 | 58 | 57 | 63 | 67 | 68 | 58 |
| Maryland | 89 | 102 | 107 | 112 | 117 | 115 | 143 | 177 |
| Mississippi | 19 | 28 | 29 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 36 | 30 |
| North Carolina | 75 | 83 | 87 | 93 | 93 | 109 | 106 | 108 |
| South Carolina | 28 | 26 | 31 | 33 | 101 | 41 | 92 | 72 |
| Tennessee | 97 | 121 | 149 | 206 | 238 | 236 | 184 | 171 |
| Texas | 219 | 315 | 443 | 447 | 447 | 488 | 504 | 667 |
| Virginia | 74 | 86 | 91 | 102 | 96 | 111 | 155 | 202 |
| W. Virginia | 27 | 30 | 35 | 37 | 35 | 36 | 38 | 39 |
| Total | 895 | 1105 | 1350 | 1504 | 1623 | 1671 | 1796 | 2025 |

Source: Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals

(Table 2)

Percentage of United States Magazines in the South by Years

| | Southern Totals | U.S. Totals | Percentage In South |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1946 | 895 | 5880 | 15.22 |
| 1951 | 1105 | 6977 | 15.83 |
| 1956 | 1350 | 7907 | 17.07 |
| 1961 | 1504 | 8411 | 17.88 |
| 1966 | 1623 | 9102 | 17.83 |
| 1971 | 1671 | 9657 | 17.30 |
| 1976 | 1796 | 9872 | 18.19 |
| 1981 | 2025 | 10873 | 18.62 |

Source: Percentages figured from totals provided in Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals